

**BICENTENARY OF THE 1807 ACT TO ABOLISH THE SLAVE TRADE IN THE  
BRITISH EMPIRE**

**SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP**

**NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 10 MAY 2006 AT VICTORIA QUAY**

**Present:**

Sheila Asante, City of Edinburgh Council  
Maureen Barrie, National Museums of Scotland  
Helen Clark, City of Edinburgh Council  
Tristram Clarke, National Archives of Scotland  
Nicola Kalinsky, National Galleries of Scotland  
Colin McAndrew, Learning Teaching Scotland  
Caralin Montgomery-Cichy, Glasgow City Council  
Reverend Lindsey Sanderson, Action of Churches Together in Scotland  
Sitakumari, Heartstone Scotland  
Carl Watt, Scottish Council of Museums

**In attendance for Scottish Executive:**

Catherine Bisset, Analytical Services Division: Social Justice Research  
Alison Colvine, Development Department: Equality Unit (Chair)  
William Fox, Education Department: Cultural Policy  
Michelle Irvine, Education Department: Schools Division  
Michael Napier, Development Department: Equality Unit (note)

**Apologies:**

Lynne Kontou, National Library of Scotland  
Karen Carruthers, National Trust for Scotland

**Copy:**

Verna Chung, Home Office

<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>  Alison Colvine welcomed attendees and explained that the aim of today's meeting was to share information on plans to commemorate the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade in 2007 between those organisations represented, with a view to establishing opportunities for 'joined-up' working / presentation in Scotland, and drafting an action plan for taking development work forward.	

2.	<p><b>UK government's proposals to mark the bicentenary at UK level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair explained that UK government proposals have been developed in a joint initiative by the Home Office, Department of Culture Media and Sport and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.</li> <li>• A cross-government steering group has been established, which meets monthly to discuss coordination of events across departments.</li> <li>• The Scottish Executive is a member, and officials have attended two meetings and fed comments into others.</li> <li>• In addition the Deputy Prime Minister chairs an external advisory group (membership list to be circulated with this note).</li> <li>• Activity in 2007 will be focused in London, Hull, Bristol, Birmingham and Liverpool.</li> </ul> <p><u>Key activities from UK government grid:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Reflecting on the past and looking into the future' information pamphlet published (copies distributed at meeting) (<a href="http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2006/reflecting_on_the_past">http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2006/reflecting_on_the_past</a>)</li> <li>• Website (understanding slavery initiative) being developed.</li> <li>• Extra money available from Heritage Lottery Fund for local commemorative initiatives: <a href="http://www.hlf.org.uk">www.hlf.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Commemorative activities under consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Memorial – Hyde Park</li> <li>○ National Service of Remembrance and Activity at Westminster Abbey</li> <li>○ Commemorative stamps, coins, banknotes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Education – National Curriculum update.</li> <li>• Consider contemporary forms of slavery, such as people trafficking, to bring the issues up to date.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>Scottish Executive's proposals to mark the bicentenary in Scotland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given its devolved remits, the Chair explained that it made sense for the Scottish Executive to establish a working group in Scotland. The working group will act as the main point of co-ordination and umbrella body for organisations involved, with a view to establishing and identifying opportunities for further joint-working.</li> <li>• Officials from the departments represented today have held internal meetings to discuss options for development.</li> <li>• An outline plan (see below) has been approved by Scottish</li> </ul>	

	<p>Ministers – Minister for Communities Malcolm Chisholm is in the lead, although we will consider how other Ministers may become involved.</p> <p><u>Outline plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alert national institutions to the bicentenary and establish whether they have plans to mark the bicentenary.</li> <li>• Approach local authorities (primarily Glasgow City Council and City of Edinburgh Council) to establish whether they have plans to mark the bicentenary.</li> <li>• Approach the Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) to gather information on its plans to mark the bicentenary.</li> <li>• Review the teaching resources available to schools on this subject, and consider whether there is a need to issue information to schools to raise their awareness of the bicentenary and existing resources available.</li> <li>• Consider opportunities to raise national awareness of the bicentenary through the Scottish Executive's 'One Scotland. Many Cultures' anti-racism campaign and associated race equality work (e.g. publish an information leaflet).</li> <li>• Link to other work such as proposed symposium on Scottish identity (following our review of race equality work) and ongoing One Scotland campaign.</li> <li>• Hold a meeting with external organisations (this meeting) to consider developing an action plan for Scotland.</li> </ul>	
4.	<p><b>External organisations' proposals to mark the bicentenary in Scotland</b></p> <p><u>National institutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A major concern voiced by representatives was the lack of lead-in time available.</li> <li>• It would be necessary first of all to establish which materials and resources currently held in national collections are relevant to the bicentenary, and how they may be used most effectively. So far the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade has not featured in national institutions' planning for events in 2007, in what already promises to be a busy year for them.</li> <li>• It would also be beneficial to have more time to consider not only how awareness of the bicentenary itself may be raised, but also how an important (yet hitherto under-reported) chapter in Scottish history may be interpreted (e.g. by exploring Scotland's/Scottish individuals' links with and experiences of the transatlantic colonies).</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration must be given to setting the right tone for the commemoration - it might be possible to work on a 'quick fix', but this would not address the issue of sustainability: is there a desire, and would it be possible, to roll this work over to 2008?</li> <li>• It was suggested that the National Library of Scotland may have work in hand for a commemorative event in 2007, and this lead will be investigated.</li> </ul> <p><u>Glasgow City Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans in hand to engage with local communities, libraries and museums on arts development project.</li> <li>• Currently considering an application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.</li> <li>• Community input is important – considering development of a bespoke website to enable this.</li> <li>• Possibility of linking with other city events e.g. the Merchant City Festival.</li> </ul> <p><u>City of Edinburgh Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on nature of any forthcoming proposal for development, City Arts Centre may be available as a venue (subject to availability, budget for exhibition, etc.).</li> </ul> <p><u>ACTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparations in hand since 2005.</li> <li>• Considering Scottish contribution to 'Set All Free' initiative in UK/England.</li> <li>• Key messages are that the bicentenary is something positive to celebrate, but we need to be clear about continuing to fight racism.</li> <li>• Leaders of Churches in Scotland to agree and issue a statement in response to commemoration of the bicentenary.</li> <li>• Other awareness-raising activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Distribution of information pamphlet to each congregation (copy circulated with this note).</li> <li>○ 'Racial Justice Sunday' in September 2007.</li> <li>○ Display at Scottish Parliament.</li> <li>○ Reading/drama events.</li> <li>○ Currently in discussion with Learning Teaching Scotland.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The year's activities will culminate in an open day at the National Trust for Scotland's David Livingston centre in Blantyre, where an ecumenical service will be held and attended by political and civic leaders.</li> </ul>	<p>SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information leaflet attached with this note.</li> </ul> <p><u>Learning Teaching Scotland</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadly supportive of Scottish Executive's aims to identify and coordinate opportunities for joint-working which raise awareness of bicentenary and issues around slavery, and happy to contribute as appropriate to development of teaching resource.</li> <li>• However, LTS would appreciate clarity about the role of formal education in this process: who is this resource aimed at, and to what end?</li> <li>• LTS recommends that the working group engages with SE Education Department's Qualifications, Assessment And Curriculum Division – important to seek generic advice on the Scottish curriculum and subject-specific advice with a view to 'product development'.</li> <li>• Vital to involve Scottish Association of Teachers of History, and make policy links between the bicentenary and history's contribution to the curriculum.</li> <li>• The group's plans to commemorate the bicentenary should work on two levels: in the short term to support local initiatives and other organisations' activities during 2007; and in the long term to ensure that the subject is better embedded within the curriculum.</li> </ul>	SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE
5.	<p><b>Heartstone proposal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A paper outlining Heartstone's proposed exhibition <i>Five Continents, Then and Now</i> had been circulated for information to group members prior to the meeting (copy attached with this note).</li> <li>• Director of Heartstone Sitakumari explained that a major element of the exhibition was enabling communities to connect with the issues of the slave trade / slavery.</li> <li>• The exhibition consists mainly of photographs and engravings of the era.</li> <li>• The subject itself is too big to do justice to in this kind of exhibition, but by drawing on an archive of engravings which have connections with Scotland and other countries affected by the slave trade / slavery, it is hoped that the audience will gain an insight into the issues through individuals' personal stories.</li> <li>• An 'English version' of the same exhibition is planned to run during 2007 in Liverpool, Hull and Bristol, with support from the Runnymede Trust.</li> <li>• The exhibition is supported by story modules (CDs containing stories, texts and photos) for use in schools.</li> <li>• Should funding be secured to promote the exhibition in</li> </ul>	

	Scotland, the plan would be launch it in a 'prestige location'; thereafter the exhibition could tour around the country at satellite sites.	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Opportunities for 'joined-up' working / presentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair acknowledged the concerns expressed by national institutions. She explained that the 1807 Act was the main vehicle for change, and given the level of activity planned at UK (English) level in 2007, there is an expectation that similar events will take place in Scotland during the bicentenary year, and every effort should be made to develop a programme of events for 2007.</li> <li>• That said, there is a political will at UK level to create a legacy for remembrance of the events associated with the slave trade in the former British Empire, and it may be the case that some opportunities could continue / be further developed during 2008 and beyond.</li> <li>• There was broad agreement that opportunities for joined-up working and presentation between those organisations represented at the meeting should be explored, and it was suggested that a 'map' of planned events and potential opportunities for joint-working in Scotland and the UK would help inform working group members' thinking.</li> <li>• It was also suggested that it would be helpful to formalise what the aims / terms of reference of the working group should be (attached with this note).</li> </ul>	<p>SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE</p> <p>SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE</p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Future working of group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to those actions noted above, members agreed that it would be beneficial to involve an established academic in this field.</li> <li>• It may be the case that in the interim specific members of the group wish to meet other members to discuss issues relating to their areas of expertise, outwith the full group: <b>please can progress updates be forwarded to Michael Napier</b> (group secretariat) for collation and dissemination.</li> <li>• The Scottish Executive will endeavour to provide premises for these meetings, if accommodation is an issue.</li> </ul>	SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Members had no other business.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Next meeting</b></p> <p>The next working group meeting will be held at <b>2 pm on Tuesday 12 September in Conference Room 3, Victoria</b></p>	

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	<b>Quay.</b> Please confirm your attendance by contacting <a href="mailto:Michael.Napier@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">Michael.Napier@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a> (telephone 0131-244 5519).	
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